

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 27, 29, and 32-36 are now pending in this application, with Claim 27 being independent. By this Amendment, Applicants have canceled Claims 30 and 31, and amended Claim 27.

Claims 27, 29, 30, 32, 35, and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application No. 09-329754 (Tomita). Claim 31 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Tomita in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,408,493 (Aoki). Claim 33 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Tomita in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,999,345 (Nakajima, et al.). Claim 34 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Tomita in view of Japanese Patent Application No. 10-10447 (Asami). Applicants traverse these rejections.

As recited in independent Claim 27, Applicants' invention is directed to a multi-beam scanning apparatus. The apparatus includes a light source unit having a laser light source, a holder holding the laser light source, and a driving circuit board for driving the laser light source. The laser light source includes a laser chip having a plurality of emission points for emitting laser beams. The apparatus also includes scanning means for scanning a surface to be scanned with the laser beams emitted by the light source unit. The scanning means is contained in a housing, with the light source unit being supported on a wall of the housing. Further, the holder has a reference portion and the laser light source is

fixed to the holder such that a hypothetical straight line connecting the plurality of emission points is inclined with respect to the reference portion so as to have an inclination angle equal to or close to a predetermined angle. The holder is fixed to the wall of the housing after the inclination angle of the hypothetical straight line is finally adjusted by moving the holder.

Thus, the holder is fixed to wall of the housing after final adjustment of the angular relation between the hypothetical straight line and the reference portion of the holder. With such a configuration, movement of the driving circuit board can be minimized in the final adjustment.

Tomita is directed to a semiconductor laser light source having a plurality of emission points. Tomita describes the use of a holder 22. Applicants submit, however, that holder 22 does not have a reference portion for adjustment of the inclination angle of a straight line connecting the plurality of emission points.

Aoki does not disclose a plurality of emission points. Consequently, Applicants submit that that document does not describe a straight line connecting a plurality of emission points or a reference portion for adjusting that straight line.

Nakajima, et al. is directed to a multi-beam light source. As shown in Figure 1 of that patent, a supporting member 103 is provided for supporting lasers 101 and 102. Applicants submit, however, that Nakajima, et al. does not describe the reference portion of the present invention.

In addition, Applicants note that Asami describes the use of a holder 21. Again, however, Applicants submit that holder 21 does not have a reference portion.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Tomita, Aoki, Nakajima, et al., and Asami, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest at least the features of a holder that has a reference portion, with a laser light source being fixed to the holder such that a hypothetical straight line connecting a plurality of emission points of the laser light source is inclined with respect to the reference portion by an inclination angle equal to or close to a predetermined angle, wherein the holder holding the laser light source is fixed to the wall of a housing after the inclination angle of the hypothetical straight line is finally adjusted by moving the holder, as recited in independent Claim 27.

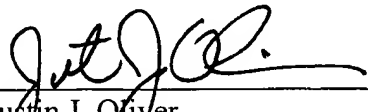
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that independent Claim 27 is allowable over the documents of record. The remaining claims in the present application are dependent claims which depend from independent Claim 27, and thus are patentable over the applied documents for reasons noted above with respect to that independent claim. In addition, each recites features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied documents. Applicants request favorable and independent consideration thereof.

In view of the comments above, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103.

This Amendment After Final Rejection is an earnest attempt to advance prosecution and is believed to clearly place this application in condition for allowance. At the very least, the changes presented herein reduce the number of issues on appeal. Applicants request entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


Justin J. Oliver
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 44,986

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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